

FUNDRAISING PLANS

Income Sources

Municipal Contributions

Planning Recommendations:

1. What is the timetable needed for securing continued funding from the city?
2. Review materials that need to be presented. Has the Main Street program been in good communication with municipal officials throughout the year? Do they understand that they are providing support to an economic development organization, not a charitable organization?
3. What is the “Value” you bring to the City?
4. Share the “Benefits” of Main Street” list so the municipality understands that the city/town is the greatest benefactor of a successful Main Street program.
5. If the town or city has remained at the same funding level for more than three years, consider asking for an increase. Municipalities should not be weaned from giving to Main Street programs.
6. Should the community develop a Business Improvement District (BID) or Tax Increment Finance District (TIF)?
7. Track the City/Town in-kind support and acknowledge their municipal investment made in downtown.
8. Plan recognition of the municipal contribution (especially volunteers from the City and in-kind support).

Annual Pledge Drive

- Downtown Businesses (retail, service, and professional businesses)
- Businesses Outside of the Downtown but in the city (industrial, retail, service, professional)
- Residents (giving levels and local philanthropists)
- Civic Organizations

Planning Recommendations:

1. Be sure 100% of the Board has made a contribution/investment to Main Street Set the goal for the total annual pledge drive (renewals and new). With renewals, after three years, ask for an increase to help cover cost increases. What percentage of your budget will come from the annual pledge drive?
2. Develop target list of new contributors/investors. Brainstorm those businesses not in Downtown, but making money in Downtown (trash haulers, food suppliers, food wholesalers). Make peer-to-peer contacts. Ask for multi-year pledges.
3. Select a desired contribution for each new contributor. Provide average investments from similar businesses.
4. Review all solicitation materials. Personalize them.
5. Plan for person-to-person follow-ups with business contacts.

6. With residential solicitations, “Friends of Downtown”, make it worth Main Street’s effort and have a minimum contribution at \$25 or \$35 per year.
7. What is the timetable for this drive to occur? Make sure it fits within the other funding efforts of the organization and does not conflict with other drives in the community.
8. Plan recognition of every contribution.

Grants

Planning Recommendations:

1. Main Street programs have been successful getting grants from some sources, such as the Charitable Foundation’s, State Council on the Arts, and the Department of Agriculture (Farmer’s Markets), or Tourism Offices.
2. Federal funds may be available from D.O.T. Transportation Enhancement Funds, Rural Development, EDA, etc.
3. Develop an annual timeline for grant application deadlines. Fit in workplan.

Merchandise Sales

Planning Recommendations:

1. Identify all items that the program will make money on for the organization. This may include annual holiday ornaments or everyday merchandise for sale.
2. If expanding into this area for funds, consider the initial investment by the program to acquire the goods. Return on merchandise sales is not immediate.
3. Merchandise for special events – sponsors may be found. Do not solicit sponsors for this during your annual pledge drive, when you may be asking for this business to contribute.

Special Events or Special Projects Fundraising

Planning Recommendations:

1. Coordinate the entire year’s calendar for sponsorship. Who will be contacted and what amount will they be asked to pay for sponsorship? Keep in mind that money raised during the annual pledge drive comes from the “charitable” side and money to sponsor events comes from a “marketing” pot of money.
2. Strive to have events break even or make money for the organization.
3. Have each committee, with special projects or special events, note the businesses they would like to solicit as sponsors. Make sure there is a plan so that businesses know what kind of recognition they will receive.
4. Build an administrative fee into all sponsorships. Many businesses have indicated they no longer want to support the administrative operation of Main Street programs, but will sponsor projects that their name will be on. For example, if a business is asked to sponsor Main Street’s newsletter, their fee should not just cover the amount of postage and printing. Add a fee that will include staff time to complete this project. Building in an administrative fee to each and every project will help close the gap on the administrative budget.
5. Review each event or projects as soon as it is complete and access new ways to increase sponsorships and fundraising for the following year.
6. Try to have all special events paid for by sponsors before the event even happens. This assures that money will not be lost if the event is rained out.
7. Offer special perks for sponsors, VIP parking, bathroom facilities, T-shirts for their employees, masters of ceremony or award presentations and photo-ops.